



# Big Cypress National Preserve Ranger-led Activities Winter 2004



**Big Cypress Visitor Center** at Oasis is located mid-way between Naples and Miami on Highway 41 (Tamiami Trail). Hours of operation are 8:30 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. daily. Closed December 25th. For a great introduction to Big Cypress National Preserve, a 15 minute movie, *The Living Waters of Big Cypress*, is available for viewing at the Visitor Center. There is also a short wildlife viewing boardwalk trail and there is access to the Florida National Scenic Trail.

Join a Big Cypress ranger for a program about the wonders of the Big Cypress Swamp and the Everglades ecosystem. All activities are free. Make reservations by calling (239) 695-1201. Reservations are accepted up to 14 days in advance of the activity date.

**Swamp Walks** - Saturdays at 10:00 a.m., Sundays and Mondays at 1:00 p.m., starting December 27th. Discover what's out there! This is a great way to experience the swamp! Cypress knees and sawgrass make long pants necessary. Wear sturdy shoes that you can get wet and muddy. Bring a change of pants, socks and shoes for your ride home. Limited to 20 people. 2 - 2 1/2 hours. Reservations required.

**Canoe Trips** - Saturdays at 9:30 a.m., starting December 27th. We'll provide the canoes or you may bring your own. These trips vary by weather, water level, tide and ranger's choice of location and duration. Knowing canoeing basics is helpful. Limited to 8 canoes. 4 hours. Reservations required.

**Campfire Programs** - Fridays and Saturdays at 7:00 p.m. Friday - Midway Campground. Saturday - Monument Lake Campground. Topics will vary by ranger's choice. Bring a lawn chair and insect repellent (just in case). There is no need to make reservations, just drop on by.

**Bicycle Trips** at Bear Island - The second and forth Sunday of each month starting January 11th. Bike trips will start at 10:00 a.m. on the second Sunday of the month and at 1:00 p.m. on the forth Sunday. Bring your own sturdy bicycle. This is a great chance to spend time on your bike seeing a variety of Big Cypress habitats. Trips depart from an access point north of I-75, off Highway 29. Details will be provided when you make your reservation. Limited to 15 people. 4 hours.

**H.P. Williams Picnic Area Talks** - Join a ranger or a volunteer at H.P. Williams picnic area Wednesday and Sunday afternoons to learn more about your preserve's natural history. A spotting scope will be available to get a close-up look at **alligators** and a variety of **birds**. Stop by with questions and for a closer look at the wildlife that is often in the area.

**On your own:** Great for wildlife and wildflower viewing especially November - May. **Turner River/Birdon Road Drive** - open prairies, cypress and pines. 17 miles. 45 minutes, gravel road. **Loop Road** - cypress, hammocks, prairies and pines. 23 miles. 2 hours; 15 miles of gravel, 8 miles paved.

**Special Requests** - With advance notice we can send a ranger to classrooms, activity centers and auditoriums for special programs. We can also have a ranger lead your special group on an adventure in the Preserve. For more information or to make a reservation for these special programs, call (239) 695-1164 or (239) 695-1201.

**Come prepared: carry water, wear sun protection, and bring insect repellent, snacks, and a sense of adventure! (Due to unforeseen circumstances this schedule is subject to change.)**